

NAIJAVOTES

SMART CITIZEN EVENT FACILITATION GUIDE



How to be Smart Citizen

Timeline: This event plan has multiple videos and activities that should last about 2 hours. Times listed are estimates and may vary based on group size and moderator style. **If desired, you can divide it into two sessions:** segments 1 and 3 for the first session, and segments 2 and 3 for the second session. Don't forget intro and wrap-up each time.

Introduction (3 minutes)

Remember to keep it short!

- Introduce yourself as a YALI Network member who wants to start an important conversation in your community about elections and how to be 'savvy citizens'.
- Briefly explain what the YALI Network is.
- Highlight the main themes of the event:
 - Importance of Voting: Democracies need active, informed, responsible citizens to be healthy. Voting is one of the core functions citizens must fulfill.
 - Real vs Fake News: Citizens need to be accurately informed. This requires extra attention to tell the difference between real and fake news and not spread false reporting.
 - Promoting Peace: Elections should never be violent. Everyone should urge their communities to refrain from violence during and after the elections.

EXPLAIN THE STRUCTURE OF THE EVENT (1 MINUTE)

Give participants an agenda to follow for the session. Walk them through what to expect. At each item in the agenda, explain all directions and activities fully and clearly before you begin.

ICE BREAKER (10 MINUTES)

Note: Watch out, these can take a long time if everyone introduces themselves to the full group!

Suggested Activity: Introduce Yourself in Pairs in 20 Words or Less

Have participants choose a partner and introduce themselves to each other in 20 words or less:

- Tell participants to include their name, where they are from, and one elected leader (past or present, Nigerian or from another country) that makes them feel inspired.
- Ring a bell or ask people to switch partners at 1 minute. Repeat this 3 or 5 times.

[For more ice breakers, see <http://www.icebreakers.ws/>]

Segment 1: Elections and Voting

Begin Optional Activity

INTRO VIDEO AND DISCUSSION (10 MINUTES) USE IF YOU ARE DIVIDING CONTENT INTO TWO EVENTS AND HAVE TIME FOR A LONGER SESSION ON ELECTIONS AND VOTING.

Watch the “What’s the Harm” video about vote buying at: yali.state.gov/harm-vote-buying. Invite participants into a brief discussion about whether the candidate’s proposal in the video is ok or not and why. Conclude by sharing any points below missed during the discussion:

- Vote buying instead of competing fairly for votes, they show a willingness to use illegal means in the political process. They will see it as a successful strategy and use it again in other areas.
- Vote buying interferes with citizens’ right to freely decide who represents them and their ability to hold elected officials accountable. If a candidate believes all they need to do to be elected is pay off voters, they have no incentive to be responsive to issues their constituents care about — issues like education and unemployment.
- Vote buying deters aspiring political leaders from running for office because it suggests that money, rather than ideas or experience, is how to win an election.

End Optional Activity

ACTIVITY: SMALL GROUP BRAINSTORM (10 MINUTES)

Challenge small groups to name 6 or more reasons voting is important in a democracy.

- Split participants into groups of 3-5 (as appropriate for event size)
- Give 3-5 minutes for brainstorming
- Have one or two people from each group present their ideas to the whole group

ACTIVITY: BRIEF LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION TO SUMMARIZE ACTIVITY (5 MINUTES)

- Did most groups come up with the same reasons?
- What were the most unique examples presented?
- How do these ideas apply in Nigeria?

WATCH LESSON #1 FROM THE YALI NETWORK ONLINE COURSE, UNDERSTANDING ELECTIONS AND CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY: GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR VOTE (7 MINUTES)

Find the lesson at yali.state.gov/courses/elections/

ACTIVITY: LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION (15 MINUTES):

Lead the discussion with these questions:

How do the examples from the small group brainstorm on why voting is important compare to the content presented in the video. What was similar or different? What was surprising?

- What issues are important to you and your community for elected officials to address? What issues have candidates talked about? Have their promises been general or specific?
- Lots of people complain about vote buying, but it continues to be a problem. In a democracy, an elected official owes people the policies promised during his or her campaign. But when voters accept a little bit of cash instead, they weaken the 'social contract' that holds the elected official accountable for governing well on behalf of the needs of the people. What are your ideas for reducing or eliminating vote selling? How can you convince voters that choosing candidates who can deliver results will pay off much more than the cash parties offer for their vote?
- Are there any ideas this group can implement in the surrounding community? If so, make a plan to meet again and create an action plan.
 - Note: Next steps can start with watching the other two video segments in Understanding Elections and Civic Responsibility, which are about community organizing and engaging with candidates: yali.state.gov/courses/elections/.

BREAK

Segment 2: Media Literacy

ACTIVITY: DISCUSSION IN PAIRS (5 MINUTES)

Share the questions for pairs to discuss:

- What is one fact about yourself? What is one opinion you have (for example, the best type of phone or the most effective way to show someone you respect them)?
- How can you tell the difference between fact and opinion when reading and sharing information?
- What makes an article exciting to share?

Watch Video Segments 1 and 2: “Stop” and “Reflect” (5 minutes): <https://yali.state.gov/checks/>

ACTIVITY: LARGE GROUP Q&A (10 MINUTES)

Ask participants to provide the answers to these questions:

- What is Media literacy?
Answer: Thinking critically about the information you consume and share, and being able to analyze and evaluate it.
- What is the difference between fact and opinion?
Answer: A fact is a piece of information that is objectively verifiable; an opinion is a subjective point of view that is not always true for everyone, everywhere (example: who the greatest athlete is).
- Being media literate requires you to exercise skepticism and question the information you consume. What types of questions do you need to assess?
Answers (can vary but could include): who the news is coming from, the goal of that person/organization who created it, who sent it to you and by what means, if multiple voices and viewpoints are represented, if the viewpoints are credible, what evidence is being used and is it verifiable on other channels or websites?

Watch Video Segment 3: “Verify” (2 minutes): <https://yali.state.gov/checks/>

ACTIVITY: LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION (15 MINUTES)

Lead the discussion with these questions:

- Can you recall a piece of information that was shared with you via social media that you later found out was false? Did you share it before finding out it was false?
- What aspects of the information could have alerted you to the fact that it was false? How did you end up learning it was false?
- What will do next time before sharing? Was it from someone you trusted? Did you let them know it was false?

LARGE GROUP ACTIVITY (15 MINUTES)

Explain that Nigeria has at least three fact-checking organizations with websites where people can look to verify accuracy of claims in the news and on social media. Note: Familiarize yourself with the sites ahead of time!

- Explain that fact-checkers have to do research so they may not have answers right away.
- Often, the research reveals that an issue is much more complex than the claim makes it sound.
- If a photo or video is involved, the research may reveal that the photo or video has been edited or is of a different place, time, or person than claimed.

Introduce the three websites. If you have internet, show each home page and clicking through relevant tabs. If you don't have internet, use the screen shots at the end of the Smart Citizen PowerPoint. Each site accepts new questions from the public.

- <http://www.factchecknigeria.com/>
 - Organized by answered questions (tab "FACTS") and questions being researched currently (tab "OPEN QUESTIONS")
 - New questions submitted on tab "ASK A QUESTION".
- <https://dubawa.org/>
 - Organized by topic. Special topic for elections, but claims about government performance and politicians' actions may be under other topics.
 - New questions can be submitted on tab "Contact Us".
- <https://africacheck.org/>
 - AfricaCheck is a member of the International Fact-Checking Network, which shares best practices for fact-checking and has a code of principles that members must uphold.
 - Nigeria content is on the Nigeria page under the "Reports" tab. There is other Nigeria content on the Factsheets tab.
 - New questions can be submitted under the "How to fact-check" tab and the "Submit a claim to check" button.

If you have internet or if you or any of the participants can use data on a mobile device, ask participants what rumors or claims they have heard recently and whether they believe they are true or false. Check two or three of these claims on the sites to see if they are true.

Segment 3: A Brief Note About Promoting Peace (5 minutes)

Ask participants to commit to nonviolence in the elections and to promote peace in their communities. Explain that:

- Electoral **violence and intimidation are not acceptable** in a democratic election. Voters should be completely free to choose the candidate they believe will best serve the country's interests. Your community should not have to tolerate intimidation and violence.
- Political leaders who are committed to democracy and to the country's interests must reject violence. People can **ask leaders to make a public peace pledge**.
- **Hate speech and divisive rhetoric should be rejected**. Comments that break down trust between groups make violence more likely.
- **Electoral fraud also makes violence more likely**, so vote-buying is not just harmful for the democratic process--it can lead to violence. You can help by refusing to sell their vote and encouraging others to refuse to sell their vote.

Wrap up (10 minutes)

Quickly reemphasize the core lessons learned (see introduction).

- Tell participants they can join the NaijaDecides campaign at <LINK> and make a pledge to support successful elections, share campaign graphics on social media, and access other content about being savvy citizens.
- Show participants where to find the YALIChecks infographics about how to identify fake news. Encourage participants to share them on social media.
- Show participants where they can view the rest of the Understanding Elections and Civic Responsibility lessons, which are about community organizing and engaging with candidates: yali.state.gov/courses/elections/ and take a quiz to get a certificate.
- Encourage participants to work together to hold this event for others in their community and circle of friends and relatives.
- Ask participants to sign up for the YALI Network at yali.state.gov.

BONUS ACTIVITY

If you have time, you can begin or end your event with the Smart Citizen Elections Quiz in the PowerPoint (on the website next to the button for this leader's guide). This will test their level of voter awareness and give them crucial voter information at the same time. Show the question and allow participants to call out the answers before clicking to show the answer on the screen. If you don't have a screen to show the quiz, you can read the questions, let participants guess the answers, and then read the correct answers to the group.

Notes